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SUPER HEROES FROM CLIVE BARKER

HOKUM & HEX

THE FINAL CHAPTER!

**IT ALL
ENDS
HERE!**

REBIRTH

OBI

THE DEATH OF A HERO!



IN A MIX OF MAGIC, COMEDY AND EXPLOSIVE SUSPENSE, FAILED STAND-UP COMIC TRIP MUNROE HAS BECOME THE LAST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST A POWERFUL, EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL OVERLORD — IN OTHER WORDS, EARTH'S LAST, BEST HOPE... IS A JOKE.

THE WIND IS *NOT* AGAINST HIS CHEEK. HE CAN HEAR THE THUMP OF HIS HEARTBEAT, SMELL THE SOURNESS OF HIS SWEAT.

AND HE DOESN'T KNOW WHY NOT, BUT TRIP MUNROE IS NOT AFRAID.

IT'S NOT THAT HE'S PARTICULARLY BRAVE. HE ALWAYS GOT SCARED BEFORE TAKING THE STAGE AT COMEDY CLUBS.

HE LIVED IN TERROR OF HECKLERS.

BUT NOW, AS "EARTH'S CHAMPION" AGAINST INVADING INTERDIMENSIONAL FLAMING-TOASTISTS, HE'S FACED AND DEFEATED HIS WORST ENEMY-- HIMSELF.

NOW ALL THAT REMAINS IS A SADISTIC PSYCHOTIC NAMED BLOODSHED.

FORGET THE HECKLERS. THIS IS ONE TOUGH ROOM.

CLIVE BARKER PRESENTS...

HOKUM & HEX

AT THE RIVER I STAND

BLOODSHED PART IV OF IV

CLIVE BARKER
CREATOR

DAVE SHARPE
LETTERER

MARIA PARWULSKI
COLORS

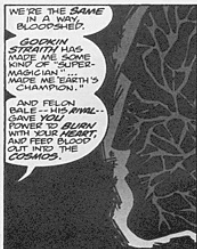
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BUT WE'RE BOTH
STILL **HUMAN**. THIS
IS STILL YOUR
WORLD.

DON'T HELP
FELON BALE
TAKE IT.

PLEASE.

NO ANSWER.
YEAH, WELL, THAT
FIGURES.

OKAY, LET'S SEE IF I HAVE
THIS STRAIGHT. THIS IS A REALM
OF OUR **DEEPEST SUBCONSCIOUS**--
OUR "HYPERMINDS."

THE PERSONIFICATION
OF **BLOODSHED**'S
IS THERE
ACROSS THE
RIVER.

MAINE
IS THIS
THING
BEHIND
ME.

AND I DON'T
EVEN **REMEMBER**
KNOW WHAT IT
REPRESENTS.

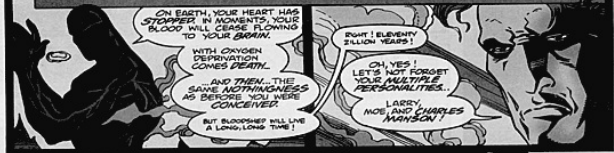
...BUT **SOMEONE**,
MY CONSCIOUS MIND
IS HERE, TOO. GUESS I'M
JUST TAKING A LONG
TIME TO DIE.

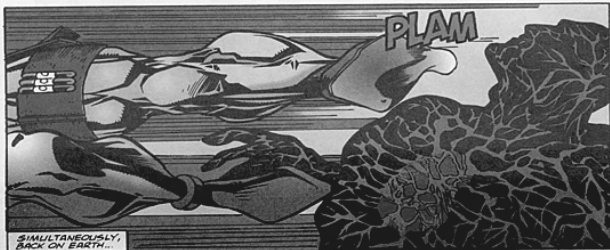
WHATEVER, IT MEANS
I STILL HAVE MY POWER
TO **TRANSFORM** THINGS.

AND **BLOODSHED**-- I
KNOW YOU'RE JUST
DOING YOUR JOB.

BE THAT
AS IT
MAY...

YOU'RE
FIRED!!!







WHILE IN A DEEPER
PART OF TONY'S AND
BLOODSHED'S MINDS...

YOU'RE NOT GONNA
PUSH ME OUT,
PSYCHOTIC

FELON BALE'LL TURN THE EARTH
INTO A WORLD OF FASCIST
SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

TAKE AWAY OUR
FREE WILL, FOR
HIS DENYED
DETERMINISM!

WELL I'M
NOT A GOD, SO
MAYBE I DON'T SEE
THE BIG PICTURE...

...BUT THERE MUST
BE SOMETHING ABOUT US
HUMANS THAT ALWAYS SEEMS
AWFULLY IMPORTANT
TO GODS!

AND IF WE DIDN'T HAVE
THE CAPACITY TO MAKE
FREE-WILL CHOICES...

...THEN WHY IN
HEAVEN AND HELL WOULD
THEY BOTHER?

WANDA! THE WHOLE
ROOM'S ROCKIN'! RIVER'S
CHUGGIN' LIKE A WASHING
MACHINE! PIECES OF SKY--
FALLIN' LIKE GLASS!

AND EVERYTHING I
TRANSFORM AND THROW...

SHHHH! SHHHH! SHHHH!

...PASSES RIGHT
THROUGH HIM!

CAN BARELY KEEP
MY BALANCE--THE NEURO-
SPHERE'S ERUPTING AROUND
ME...LIKE IT'S TRYING TO
SWALLOW ME UP!!

SURE! I OFFEND IT!
CONSCIOUS MINDS AREN'T
SUPPOSED TO BE HERE!

FACE IT, MAN! THE WHOLE WORLD'S
AGAINST YOU! BLOODSHED'S RIGHT!
YOU'RE FIGHTING A FIGHT YOU
CAN'T WIN!



THAT'S
RIGHT, TRIP--
YOU CAN'T.

WHAT?
HOW DID
YOU--?

WE'RE ALL
OF ONE MIND
HERE. WE ALL
KNOW THE SAME
THINGS, DEEP
INSIDE.

THEN YOU ALREADY
KNOW MY DOUBTS
ARE ALWAYS TEMPORARY!

I'M A SURVIVOR!
I'LL NEVER QUIT!
I'LL THROW EVERY
THING I HAVE
AT YOU...



INCLUDING
THE KITCHEN
SINK!

NOW, THAT
WAS TRULY
DESPERATE.

AS OPPOSED
TO FAIRLY
DESPERATE.

OH, YOU!
YOU KILL
ME!

YES, AND
RECOMPENSE
KILLS EVERYONE
ELSE!



INCLUDING
THE KITCHEN
SINK!

NOW, THAT
WAS TRULY
DESPERATE.

AS OPPOSED
TO FAIRLY
DESPERATE.

OH, YOU!
YOU KILL
ME!

YES, AND
RECOMPENSE
KILLS EVERYONE
ELSE!



WELL, SELF--
WHAT NOW? MAYBE
IT IS TIME TO
FLOW WITH THE
INEVITABLE.

NO, THAT'S TOO
DETERMINISTIC.
NOTHING IS
INEVITABLE.

EXCEPT
DEATH--
THE LONG
GOODBYE.

HUH?
WHAT IS IT?
YOU SEE
SOMETHING?

OR
SOMEONE?

MONA
LISA???

HI,
TRIP.

DID YOU
WANT TO
SEE ME?





I UNDERSTAND...
A LOT OF
THINGS.

I FELT THAT SLAP... HER
HAND DIDN'T PASS THROUGH
ME THE WAY MY PROJECTILES
PASSED THROUGH
BLOODSHED.

I GUESS I'VE BEEN
DOING THIS ALL WRONG.
I'VE LET THE RIVER BE
MY EXCUSE... FOR NOT
MEETING BLOODSHED
EYE TO EYE.

IT'S YOUR
CHOICE
NOW, TRIP.

MAKE
IT
MAKE IT !!



BLOODSHED!
COME FACE ME!
HERE IN THIS
RIVER!

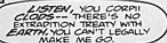
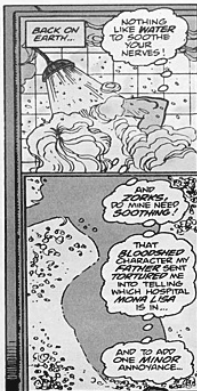
MAKE YOUR CHOICE,
BLOODSHED! THE RIVER IS
RISING! YOUR ROCK
IS CRUMBLING!

THAT'S IT! THAT'S RIGHT!
COME TO ME! GIVE ME
ONE LAST SHOT!

YOU'RE JUST A
PIECE OF MIND
HERE! A PSYCHO!
A NUT-CASE!

I CAN
BEAT YOU,
BLOODSHED!
I... I...





THE NEURO-
SPHERE.

THERE ARE FEW
SURVIVAL TACTICS
FOR THOSE CAUGHT
IN THE RIVER
OF LIFE.

YOU CAN FLOW
WITH THE
CONSTANT,
CHURNING
CHANGES...

...OR BEAT ARMS
AGAINST THEM
AND RISK REACHING
YOUR DESTINATION...

...OR
DROWN.

WEEKS AGO, IN HIS
OLD LIFE, TRIP WAS A
LEAF, FLOATING
WHEREVER THE WATERS
FLOWED.

NOW, HIS BODY/PSYCHE/
SELF BRUISED FROM
THESE SUBCONSCIOUS
ROCKS AND BRANCHES,
FIGHTS AND
EMBRACES THE
RIVER...

... AND IN DOING SO...
SAVES HIMSELF.

MAN... MAN...
MANIFESTATION OF
MY... DEEPEST
SUBCONSCIOUS... MY
HYPERMIND!... SAVED
MY... CONSCIOUS
SELF.

BOY...
IS THAT LIKE
SYMBOLIC OR
WHAT?

I'M STILL ALIVE...
FOUGHT EVERYTHING...
LIFE'S THROWN
AT ME.

AND I'LL
FIND... SOME
WAY... TO STOP
YOU, TOO.



HI. MY NAME'S
VINCENT.
WHAT'S YOURS?

AND
WHAT'S
THIS
THING?

NOTHING
BUT AN OUTER
PERSONA.

I'M TRIP
MUNROE.

DO YOU
REMEMBER WHAT
YOU **DO**, VINCENT?
DO YOU REMEMBER
WHAT YOU ARE?

I, UM, I...
I DON'T **KNOW.**
I'M JUST ME--
THAT'S ALL.

NO, WE'RE EACH **LOTS**
OF PEOPLE. NOT JUST ONE
PERSON. WE'RE **LAYERS--**
LIKE AN ONION.

WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

I MEAN ALL
PEOPLE ARE DIFFERENT
ASPECTS -- **PERSONAE--**
AT DIFFERENT TIMES.

--THE
TRIP-
MEISTER!

--FRANKEN
TRIP!

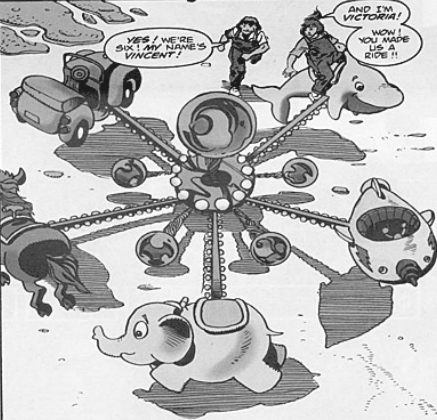
--MUH MAIN
MAN TRIP!

--THE
TRIPSTER!

DEPENDING ON
THE **CIRCUMSTANCES,**
I'M NOT JUST
TRIP BUT --

--GOODBYE
MR. TRIPS!

WE'RE NOT JUST
ONE PERSON! **NOBODY** IS!











SO YOU AND ME, PAL-- WE'RE GOING TO HIT HIM, FIRST!



GLAD TO HEAR... YOU'RE NOT GIVING UP!

WE'LL LOOK AT IT THIS WAY...

WHAT ELSE HAVE I GOT TO DO?

**TO BE
CONTINUED...
Somehow,
Someday.**

**check out
our letters
page
for
details !**

PLEASE SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:
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NEW YORK, NY 10016

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EDITOR

HOKUM & HEX

the magical mystery tour

It would be an effort, we knew. Doing anything different always is, and I'm a firm believer in an old Chinese proverb that's like, "anything that comes easy isn't worth doing." But going into it, we knew we had a lot. In our favor: A great, incredibly unusual (some would say unlikely) hero, Trip Munroe; An original and intriguing concept; And a heck of a name: HOKUM & HEX. A thing of quality's a joy to behold—and to help create.

And the hard part wouldn't be in getting creative people interested in the project. The problem wouldn't be in appealing to Clive's thousands of fans out there, aware of any project with his name on it gets much more than a cursory glance. They'd know his name meant quality.

what's the problem?
No, the problem in launching this title would be in appealing to those who didn't know Clive's name. Those who were UNWARE that Clive's last several novels were not horror. Those to whom Clive's name was still synonymous with horror. We wanted both those hungry for the newest brain-child of modern literature's greatest imaginer, and those readers who were hungry for more, but weren't sure what they were hungry for.

But we were up for the challenge. We started this journey with the certainty that if we could get a reader to pick up one issue of this decidedly different comic, he wouldn't be sorry. That, and the promise of one heck of a ride.

What a long, strange trip it's been.

And from the beginning that promise was fulfilled. We received a ton of mail all with an amazingly similar message...that the readers who picked up this book were looking for something more than the usual spandex and machine gun crowd, and they'd found the end of that quest. This book was the instant favorite of a huge group of former comics readers who had decided to give super heroes one more try. The prospect of a hero born of the fertile psyche of imaginer Clive Barker was a glowing place for that one last try. And in HOKUM & HEX you weren't disappointed.

But now, sadly, they're going to be, as we announce that this is the last issue of HOKUM & HEX. As much fun as this book was, and as enthusiastic as your responses have been, the bottom line for us now is that the book simply isn't getting out to enough people in its present form.

what's the future?
I'm also a firm believer in the old proverb (I think I got it from Donald Duck) that goes something like, "don't work harder, work smarter." The fact that we couldn't lock into our audience until our numbers had dipped too low meant that we had to rethink this series. So we're taking time to regroup, and relaunch in the future.

And that's where you come in. As you know, this book has acquired a hearty and devoted following. We intend to be true to you by giving you the chance to be heard. Do you want to see the further adventures of Trip and Gorkill in a new incarnation? Then put your pen where your mouth is. We're available for your comments at the above address, and anxiously await the mail bags of responses!

meanwhile
You can still get your fixes of your favorite titles, and the flavor you can't find anywhere else, this summer. That when we'll be releasing both a HYPER-RUN and an ECTORD special, with some special guest appearances by some of the other RAZORLINE characters you've come to know and love.

Until then, rest easy knowing you haven't seen the last of Trip Munroe—though when we meet again, you may not recognize him.

And the Decamundi may never be the same...

Dear HOKUM & HEX,

Despite the fact that I believe Trip Munroe to be my karmic doppleganger in another dimension and, therefore, would love to see his name prominently featured on those front covers in the big comic-book universe, I vote you stay with the title HOKUM & HEX. It's got a nice ring to it, plus it provides a challenge to new readers. Besides, if you change the title, people will only ask "What's a Trip Munroe?"

Keep up the good work!

Diana Federow
4470-107 Sunset Blvd Suite 184
Los Angeles, CA

With the end of the series on us, Diana, the title of the book comes up as a moot point.

We're bummed here in the office, but in a tough market it takes a while for something great to be seen for what it is. And time is not something we have. However, just because the series is ending doesn't mean that Trip Munroe is gone forever. For a short time, maybe, but it doesn't mean he has to be gone forever.

We know that ending this series disappoints a good many readers. Your letters tell us that. The good news is that we're aiming to set that right this summer, with the start-up of three new titles, all from the mind of Clive Barker. In any one of these titles, Trip could turn up, but for him to do that, we have to hear that readers really want him back. With readers clamoring to get more of Trip

Munroe, it'll be no time before he gets his own title back. We hope that wasn't subtle enough for those of you who don't normally write in.

Dear HOKUM & HEX,

I've got to say right here, right now, that this is the book to break all other books; this is amazing stuff. The art is just mind blowing. Anthony Williams can mow my lawn any day of the week, he's just that good. Does he do tattoos? I haven't got one yet, but it seems to me that comic artists are the logical candidates to do body ink. And Anthony Williams is the perfect artist. Wouldn't it be great to see Gorkill on someone's arm? I don't think that's for me, but I do think that Anthony could do my skin justice.

Steven Ivans
P.O. Box 454
Roshoro, NC 28382

Hmmm, HOKUM & HEX, the tattoos. That's an interesting idea. Maybe if Anthony started doing tattoos he could do pages on peoples backs and combine the two art forms. It would make for an interesting problem in our art return department. We could just see the headache of having to feed the art. Who knows, maybe that's the next cutting edge book enhancement we've been looking for. Then again, maybe it's just a bad idea.

Dear HOKUM & HEX,

As for your crossover with Marvel idea, don't do it! One of the main reasons I never got into comics as a lad is that you could never just read, say, the HULK, you had to read all of the crossovers he might make just to keep up, whether you like the crossovers or not. Even if you have no clue whom the crossover is with.

I for one don't want to read about Philip or Dex meeting up with someone whom I've never cared about. To me, the Marvel universe is full of lackluster clones, and I'd like to keep the Decamundi very separate from them. After all, the dullness could be contagious!

I have to tell you, as much as I love the new Razorline titles, I'm not sure that I'd bother buying an X-MEN crossover; there would be too much detail and history about people I don't really know about. It would ruin the book. Keep the books true and separate.

Dawn Lisowski
2416 Hamilton Avenue
Trenton, NJ 08619

Thanks for writing, Dawn. Your argument is a sound one. We have tossed that very thought out as a reason not to cross over into Marvel continuity ourselves. We understand your concerns, and we take it into the sternest consideration. Keep the thoughts coming.

Dear Hucksters & Hexologists,

Rarely do I feel motivated to generate letters to publishers, be they fan-type or otherwise, unless I want to try to sell a story, but I felt that

maybe just this once wouldn't kill me.

I just polished off the fifth issue of HOKUM & HEX and, as is my wont, read the letters page. I felt that maybe some of the statements in that page in that issue needed some input from an ardent fan.

I've been following HOKUM & HEX since issue one and must say that, as far as I'm concerned, the title is just fine. What I've noticed about Clive Barker's creations in general is that they may have titles and contain terms which at first bear no obvious link to the story; thinking about these unexpected titles or terms gives an insight to the story otherwise unavailable. This is by no means an unconventional aspect of literature; witness Joyce's "Ulysses," Hemingway's "Hills Like White Elephants" or Faulkner's "Go Down, Moses," to mention just three. So as far as I'm concerned, HOKUM & HEX is not only a good title — it is rooted in a long tradition of writing. Besides, what would an alternative title be? Trip Munroe, joking Champion? Ball the Felon? The fat of Earth rests on the shoulders of a failed stand-up comic? Sheesh.

Remember, gentlemen, when Coke changed its formula? Remember what happened? Remember that those who do not recall history are doomed to repeat it. Words to the wise (from a dedicated fool).

Also I felt that I should respond to Dennis Sloan's statement that Sol looking like Antoinette is "...confusing and doesn't help the story." In my opinion it reinforces the human aspect of Trip; although he has godlike powers, he isn't always capable of keeping them under rein. It is Trip's fallibility that allows this facade to be placed over Sol; perhaps, as Trip gains wisdom and learns more about himself (and thus, I assume, his powers), the false image will dissolve and Sol will once more appear as himself.

As far as Jim Dale's comment about crossovers with the Marvel Universe: if you do, do them sparingly. However, since Marvel comics seem to exist as actual comics within the Barkerverse, perhaps Trip with his powers, could animate some of these comic book heroes in his fight to save the Earth. This would allow a limited crossover and still retain the integrity of the independent Razorline universe.

At any rate, keep the issues running, if you would, and I'll keep buying them and recommending them to anyone I meet who's looking for something somewhat different in a monthly comic.

By the way, the last comic series I was really dedicated to was GROO THE WANDERER. This should tell you something of my preference in the genre.

Warren Ockrassa
525-B East 2nd Street
Tucson, AZ 85705

Great idea you have there, Warren, as to how we could pull off a Razorline crossover with other Marvel super heroes. The final word hasn't come in on whether we are going to do any kind of crossover, but the way you suggest would be a sharp way to do it.

Dear Razorline guys,

HOKUM & HEX is entertaining, funny, exciting, intriguing, fast-paced but relaxed, and it

all fits together to form the best written comic I've read in a long time. This is all of course thanks to Frank Lovece.

But let's not be hasty and leave out the art team of Anthony Williams and Andy Lanning, no sir! Separately they may not stand out but combined they take the exploits of Trip Munroe to the next level of storytelling, giving Trip a semi-realistic look but keeping him animated enough to keep the book down to earth. Congrats to Frank, Tony, and Andy, as well as John Constanza, Maria Parwulski and the editor guys.

Now for the question:

Will Trip ever totally control his powers?

Seth Dellinger
335 Oak Flat Road
Newville, PA 17241

Of course, Seth, Trip is on the path to true enlightenment. He is destined to be Earth's best defense against any and all threats. But not right away. He's still got a lot to learn, but he's getting better all the time. This last issue was a major growing period in the super heroic career of Trip. What's more, we suspect that even without a series, the Munroe-melster will have the power to continue to grow. Don't be surprised if the next time you see him he's not the same old Trip. Stay alert. He might pop up any number of places.

Dear HOKUM & HEX,

Just dropping a line to let everyone involved with this title know what a consistently good read it is. I recently had the pleasure of meeting the writer of this great publication at the Pittsburgh convention and expressed to him how much I enjoyed his work, (but thanks again anyway, Frank). Anyway, I'd just like to say that this book does what most other comics fail to do — it entertains. Unlike the books where the fight scene is the only attraction, HOKUM & HEX offers a different look at someone who possesses supernatural powers. It shows Trip's life is just like anyone else's even though he has the ability to defend his life with a rubber chicken. I think that the Razorline titles are going to change the way comics will be viewed as a bunch of super heroes chasing around their villainous counterparts throughout the populated cities of America.

Bill Hayes
2715 Grover Street
McKeesport, PA 15132

Thanks for the words, Bill. One of the great things about working on HOKUM & HEX is the overwhelmingly good response it's gotten from the people who have read it. By the many letters we've gotten, and are still getting, we know we've got a good book on our hands. But, with the printing of this last issue, now is the important time to get us your letters. And that means all our readers! Those that have been with us from the beginning, and those just checking in. We want to hear from everyone! It's important we get readers' feedback, so even if it's just a note, write in.

Dear HOKUM & HEX,

What a great book! Never before have I read a comic that contains so much of me in it! Let me explain:

HOKUM & HEX is terrific. Myself, being somewhat of a comedian (not professional or stand-up or anything — I'm just a funny guy to have at parties) can truly appreciate the humor and comedy put into this book.

Aside from that, believe it or not, I am a magician. I have done several professional shows, as well as tricks at parties, and shows for the family.

The writing, oh man! it's terrific! I write a little, that is, when I'm not studying (I'm also a student at Western Kentucky University). I'm not a very good writer, but at least I'm trying. Clive Barker can come up with some really crazy stuff! I think that these new Razorline books are some of the best books out there, and I hope that you guys continue to grow at the rate that you have been.

Good art? Nope! Fantastic art! The colors, the inks, hell, it's all good. I've been helping a buddy down here at Western ink a comic that he's working on with another artist. As soon as we get a good start on getting it all together, I might send some of you guys some if it (no, don't worry, I'm not looking for a job or anything. Just thought you guys might be interested).

I've purchased all the number one issues of the Razorline series, but due to the financial traumas that today's college students live with (for instance, my strict Ramen noodle diet, I'm only going to be able to keep up with SAINT SINNER and, as if you hadn't guessed it, HOKUM & HEX).

Keep up the great work, fellas and females, and if it's not a problem, send me some cool stuff (autographs, sketches, some of Maria Parwulski's belly button fuzz, whatever you can dig up).

Joe Farguesen
Poland Hall
1756 Russellville Road Room 208
Bowling Green, KY 42101-3567

First off, Joe, good luck with the magic. It's a hard world out there to impress with any stage show, magic or otherwise, but if you're good (and persistent), in the end, you'll be successful. As to you're comments on the book, thanks. We appreciate heartfelt praise.

Now we figure, being this is the last issue and all, that we would do something we don't usually do. Normally, if someone writes in and asks for free stuff we don't give it much weight. It's not that we laugh the person off, but it's just that you've got to realize the amount of people writing in purely asking for freebies. Marvel doesn't normally believe in unearned handouts. Normally, that is. Sometimes, we just feel generous. That's why we've decided to send you something, Joe. Now don't the rest of you get any ideas. We just as randomly, more often in fact, send things out to people that don't ask for anything. We're not saying exactly what it is we're sending, but we'll tell you flat out, it doesn't have anything to do with our colorist Maria Parwulski.